

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS DJIBOUTI 000474

SIPDIS

DEPT. FOR AF/E J. GAFFNEY, AF/PD C. EFIRD, A. JOHNSON, AND
R. SMITH; DEPT. PASS TO USAID

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [EAID](#) [KPAO](#) [CT](#) [DJ](#)

SUBJECT: DELAY IN IMPLEMENTATION OF EACTI ENGLISH LANGUAGE
PROJECT

1. (U) Post has received a high volume of requests in Djibouti for English language training. Djibouti is a Francophone island in a predominantly English speaking Horn of Africa region. The arrival of CJTF-HOA, the only U.S. Military base in Africa, has created an additional incentive for Djiboutians to learn English as they seek employment and contracts with Department of Defense contractors providing logistical support to the base.

2. (U) In response to this demand, Post approached the fledgling English language department at Pole University Djibouti (PUD), an emerging partner to Post's Public Affairs Section, to explore possibilities for collaboration. Staff and students alike bemoaned the lack of a language laboratory where they could listen to native English speakers and practice pronunciation and comprehension. After identifying a potential funding mechanism Post approached PUD Director Hiba Ahmed Hiba, accompanied by the English language department chief, and presented him with the idea. Hiba responded positively and stated that his staff would prepare a proposal outlining their needs for a laboratory. Post has information that the proposal is complete but remains on Hiba's desk.

3. (U) Conoff met March 29 with Mohamed Ali Hassan, Director of bi-lateral relations at the Djiboutian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to solicit support in the establishment of an English language laboratory and American Corners at PUD. The meeting was a follow-on to Ambassador's March 27 meeting with Hassan on other matters in which Hassan requested U.S. assistance in providing English language training opportunities for Djibouti. Ambassador had explained to Hassan the existence of a language laboratory proposal under the East Africa Counterterrorism Initiative (EACTI) that had been funded but which languished with PUD. Hassan asked for a copy of the letter to PUD offering the project, which Conoff subsequently delivered.

4. (U) Post has been delayed in the implementation of EACTI funds for these projects by the inaction of PUD Director Hiba. The initiatives are actively supported by Hiba's PUD staff and Education Ministry officials. Hassan asked to be courtesy copied on all Public Affairs related correspondence with Government of Djibouti institutions and commented that he would ask the Minister of Education to investigate the delay. Hassan also said he would like the Embassy to explore ways in which the MFA could profit from U.S. assistance to create the institutional capacity to provide English language formation to its staff. Ambassador Ragsdale and Conoff will meet with PUD Director Hiba April 1 to accentuate Post's desire to commence implementation of EACTI funds which must be obligated this fiscal year.

5. (U) Comment: Post continues to actively pursue Public Diplomacy activities in this front line state in the Global War on Terrorism. Post is working to complete the ground work for EACTI fund obligation but faces unique challenges. The lack of PD activities at Post since the closing of USIS some fifteen years ago has left a dearth of partners that must be rebuilt from the ground up. The comparatively massive resources available to the French Cultural Center and the French Cooperation tacitly discourage engagement with U.S. partners. In addition, significant portions of Post's limited human resources are consumed with media outreach. End Comment.
RAGSDALE